

It was a frightful journey for two boys to make. Huge boulders and lumps of coal, sometimes piled up almost to the roof, obstructed their way, so that they had to crawl upon all fours. Great masses of timber were tangled in wild confusion. Several men passed them shouting for help, but in the darkness and excitement the boys were not noticed.

Then while the shaft was still a good distance away, poor little Jud completely collapsed.

"I can't take another step," he whimpered, as he sank down exhausted. "But, oh, Dannie! you won't leave me, will you?"

Tortured by his terrible burns, dizzy from the blow at the back of his head, and weak from loss of blood and the fierce struggle to escape the danger that threatened on every side, it seemed as though Dannie might scarce save himself much less help Jud.

Yet the heroic lad did not hesitate for one moment in responding to the little trapper's appeal. Stooping down he picked him up, lifted him upon his shoulders, and thus burdened, staggered on again with many a slip and stumble and frequent halts for rest, until he too could go no farther, and with a pitiful groan of despair he dropped upon the wet floor.

"I'm clean done out," he said faintly to Jud. "You go on if you're rested. Maybe you'll find some of the men, and they'll come back for me."

But now it was Jud's turn to stand by his friend.

"Indeed I won't leave you," he replied with spirit; "I'll just stay here until you can start again."